

THE STATUS REPORT



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Over 600 Attend Celebration to Honor MCSW's 2007 Unsung Heroines!

They came from all walks of life to gather for the 4th annual Unsung Heroines celebration to honor the 268 Unsung Heroines of 2007 at the Massachusetts State House. The halls of the State House were filled with electric excitement and much emotion. The day began with each honoree checking in and receiving their corsage and gift bag. The corsages, made and donated by Flowers by Darlene, consisted of a beautiful yellow rose wrapped in purple netting.

Honoree's gift bags included citations from Governor Deval Patrick, President of the Senate Therese Murray and Speaker of the House of Representatives Salvatore F. DiMasi; a Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women certificate; a beautiful pin, which was designed by MCSW Commissioner Roseanna Means, MD and manufactured by Designs by Lucinda; and an event program book containing the names and biography's of all the honoree's along with many, many ads from our sponsors.

After checking in, honorees went to their regional ceremony. Due to the many honorees, there were 3 concurrent regional ceremonies going on at the same time to honor them. The Nurses Hall ceremony honored women from the following counties: Berkshire, Hampden, Hampshire, Franklin & Suffolk. The Grand Staircase ceremony honored women from Barnstable, Bristol, Dukes, Nantucket, Plymouth and Worcester counties while the Great Hall ceremony honored women from Essex, Middlesex and Norfolk counties.

Immediately following the regional ceremonies, honorees went to the Grand Staircase where a group photo was taken. From there, honorees and guests convened in the Gardner Auditorium where they heard from guest speakers Governor Deval Patrick, Senate President Therese Murray and the former Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts Evelyn Murphy. Honorees and guests then attended a *Just Desserts* reception in their honor in the Great Hall.

As everyone mingled and shared unsung heroine stories, photographers were on hand taking pictures to capture the moments. Photographs are posted on the World Wide Web and are easily accessible via links posted on the MCSW Web site, www.mass.gov/women.



Pictured at left:

Governor Deval Patrick addressing the 2007 Unsung Heroines and their guests.

Seated, bottom row:

Elizabeth Houlihan, MCSW Chair

Seated, top row, L - R:

MCSW Commissioners Helen Jackson, MD, Gloria Coney, Ruth Bramson and Vice-Chair Marianne Fleckner

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Executive Director Corner

What a phenomenal month May was for the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women!

On May 16 we proudly honored our Unsung Heroines of 2007. These 268 women *don't make the news, but surely make a difference* in communities all across the Commonwealth. Our heroines are remarkable women who daily perform random acts of kindness with no desire or expectation for recognition. They work quietly behind the scenes, without fanfare, to drive change and help others. They are young, old, black, white, professional, formerly homeless and everything in between. They are activists, advocates, organizers, cheerleaders, women in the trenches and women in the board rooms.

- Our heroines rise to the occasion – be it Hurricane Katrina or a community catastrophe. They cook, they drive, they fundraise, they volunteer, they protect the environment and extend themselves when no one else will. They turn their own personal tragedies into examples of hope, strength and empowerment for others.
- They bring others along – they rally for the downtrodden, empower and support those in need, register people to vote, encourage women's political participation, start free legal clinics. They combat poverty, violence, oppression, discrimination and marginalization. They work locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.
- They're committed to education – they raise funds to provide needed school and sports materials and equipment, they tutor, they mentor, they teach English as a Special Language to new immigrants and advance literacy on many levels. They encourage women's financial viability.
- Health challenges spur women on to help fellow survivors, the blind, the frail, veterans, and so many others to access health care, get the prescriptions they need, support others.
- They take care of our children and our elders, driving them to doctor's appointments, working with them to secure needed prescriptions, and advocate for their care when they are unable to do so themselves.
- They are innovators and imaginers. They create big results with few resources. They create unique solutions to challenging problems.

We planned a smashing afternoon in their honor at the State House, which was highlighted by remarks from Governor Deval Patrick, our first female Senate President Therese Murray and former Lt. Governor Evelyn Murphy. As Governor Patrick noted, for many it was their first visit to the State House. And many also weren't quite sure why they were there – truly not recognizing the importance of their selfless contributions. Smiles abounded and family and friends were able to share our pride in these wonderful women.

The MCSW is fortunate that this initiative has resonated and engaged many across the Commonwealth. We are grateful for the hundreds of nominators, including local and state elected officials, educators, librarians, our partners in women's work, pastors, those who serve the elderly and many more, who have helped us achieve our goal of finding women who we can spotlight and hold up as models to be replicated all across the state. And to all of those who joined us in this initiative and enabled us to make this celebration possible – the nominators, corporate sponsors, volunteers and others - our heartfelt thanks.

May was also a great month because the bill that the Commission is working on with Senator Harriette Chandler and Representative Alice Wolf, SENATE NO. 1858 AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE HUMAN RESOURCES DIVISION TO UNDERTAKE A STUDY OF THE STATE'S JOB CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM, had a very good hearing before the State Administration and Regulatory Oversight Committee, chaired by Senator Dianne Wilkerson. Senator Wilkerson noted that she thought the bill was "the most important piece of economic development legislation that I have seen in my time in the State House." The Commission is actively working with all parties to move the bill forward.



MCSW's Remarkable Interns in the Summer Spotlight!

The MCSW is fortunate to have NINE remarkable interns this summer. Each of them brings their talent, skills and enthusiasm to the MCSW to assist staff in accomplishing a long list of projects. We'd like to introduce you to each and give a brief description of their background and what they are working on. Our interns are enthusiastic about advocating for women and girls, and helping one another. The diverse perspective of each intern continuously enriches staff and their substantive work vastly expands the capacity of the commission. A short biography of each follows.

Liz Brennan is a rising junior at Mount Holyoke College, where she is studying sociology and history. This summer Liz will be reconnecting with former commissioners and partners as she attempts to map out the history of the CSW in preparation for the MCSW's 10 year anniversary in 2008. Thrilled to be a part of the Commission, Liz is excited to watch the CSW resolve the many gender issues she passionately studied throughout the year.

Kat Dunn is working as a research and resource development intern with MCSW for the summer and hopes to enroll in Simmons' Gender and Cultural Studies MA program in the fall. She graduated magna cum laude from Lesley College with a BS in Global Studies and Counseling Psychology in 2006 and has completed one year of Lesley University's Master's program in Counseling Psychology. In addition to working as an intern with the MCSW, she teaches a Jr. High Youth Group, works on an acute residential treatment unit in a children's hospital, and at Cambridge Cares About AIDS.

Eliza Buddenhagen is a student at Emory University and, as a rising sophomore, is the youngest member of the office. She has an energetic spirit and broad interests that range from business to law to women's rights. During Eliza's time with the MCSW she will focus her attention on the issues of pay equity and pay equity achievements in the private sector.

Rachel Caris is rising senior at Brown University and was the first intern to join the Commission this summer. She is active in a number of leadership organizations on her campus and is particularly committed to registering citizens to vote. Rachel will develop a women's voting guidebook and program proposal to increase the engagement of young women in politics.

Michele DesAutels is graduate student at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. After serving the Peace Corp in Uzbekistan she returned to the States with a zeal for public service. She is active in a number of women and girl's organizations. Michele will assist the Commission by developing its legislative resources and reviewing the state budget as it affects women and girls.

Victoria Horan is a rising senior at Siena College, a small Franciscan college in Albany, New York. Her studies focus on women in politics. During her time with the Commission she will help to grow the Massachusetts Women's Resource and Referral Network.

Claire Hsu is a rising junior at Williams College and has just declared a double-major in Chinese and Political Economy. Although currently interning at a government agency, she's interested in exploring other sectors as well (NGO, UN, non-profit, corporate). Aside from her interest in promoting equity here in the states, she also seeks to work on the establishment of a truly just legal system in China; specifically she hopes in the near future to secure an internship at the CECC (Congressional Executive Commission on China). After leaving the MCSW, Claire will be study abroad for a year in Singapore and Beijing.

Sarah Randle, also a Williams College student, is a rising senior interested in women and work. On campus she has a rigorous course load of women's studies classes and is the managing editor of *The Williams Record*. Sarah will be helping to coordinate the efforts of the Massachusetts Coalition for Women's Wage Equality.

Adrienne Shea is a rising senior at Wesleyan University. She is particularly interested in how legal and social changes have affected the status of women. During her time with the Commission, Adrienne will develop the content and coordinate the review of a legal handbook for women. After graduation she hopes to continue on to law school.

Commission Corner

The MCSW Welcomes a New Commissioner!

Madhu Sridhar, immediate past president of the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts, has been appointed to the MCSW by Senate President Therese Murray. Ms. Sridhar will fill the unexpired term left by the retirement of Commissioner Kathleen Casavant.

Other Noteworthy News!

AAUW Honors Unsung Heroines at Remarkable Tea

The Taunton Area Branch of the American Association of University Women hosted their annual Tea to Celebrate Remarkable Women on May 20, 2007.

Veronica Casey, AAUW President emceed and Dr. Benedicta Eyemaro, Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership at Bridgewater State College was the keynote speaker.

Pictured at right include MCSW 2007 Unsung Heroines: Bottom l to r, Diane Driscoll, Denise Papagano, Arlene Wood, Christine Wordell, and Dr. Benedicta Eyemaro; Top l to r, Roberta Perry, Catherine Brogna, Vicky Casey and Ruth Goold.



Apply Now for Graduate Certificate Program for Women in Politics & Public Policy!

For the past four years the MCSW has been fortunate to have a year long intern from the Graduate Certificate Program for Women in Politics and Public Policy at UMASS Boston, so we can personally attest to the quality of the women who go through this program. In fact we think so much of them, we hired a graduate – Jill Ashton, our Outreach Coordinator.

If this might be something you or someone you know might be interested in, applications are being accepted through June 29. Participants will join women from around Massachusetts, the nation, and the world in a challenging and exciting learning environment designed for women who want to make a change - and make a difference! The program offers the opportunity for enrollees to discover their public passion, develop intellectual capacity and leadership skills, and meet women from diverse cultural and professional backgrounds. The learning environment focuses on both academic excellence and professional development.

Whether you are a graduating college senior, a professional seeking to change careers, a woman with ambitions for a master's or PhD level degree, or are returning to academia after some years, this program may be right for you. To find out more, call Donna Stewartson at (617) 287-6785 or e-mail her at donna.stewartson@umb.edu.



Upcoming Events & Happenings

- **June 13, 5:00-7:00 p.m. MCSW Executive Committee Meeting**

To be held at the MCSW, Charles F. Hurley Bldg., 19 Staniford St., 6th FL Boston, MA. For more information, call the MCSW office at 617-626-6520, or e-mail [MCSW](mailto:MCSW@state.ma.us)

- **June 14, 3:00-6:00 p.m. Massachusetts Women's Commissions Meeting**

To be held at the MCSW, Charles F. Hurley Bldg., 19 Staniford St., 3rd FL Boston, MA. For more information, call Jill Ashton the MCSW office at 617-626-6520, or e-mail [MCSW](mailto:MCSW@state.ma.us)

- **June 27, 9:30-5:30 p.m. MCSW Full Commission Annual Planning Meeting**

For a complete listing of events please visit www.mass.gov/women/upcoming.htm

Commission Officers & Members

FY 2007

Ruth Bramson, Dover
Linda Cavaoli, Worcester
Gloria Coney, Roxbury
Lianne Cook, Salem
Helen Corbett, Danvers
Erika Ebbel, Cambridge
Donna Finneran, Mattapan
Marianne Fleckner, Vice-Chair, Westford
Catherine Greene, Esq., Brighton
Elizabeth Houlihan, Chair, Falmouth
Helen Jackson, MD, W. Roxbury
Judith Kurland, Brookline
Roseanna Means, MD, Wellesley
Angela Menino, Hyde Park
Carol Pimentel, New Bedford
Susana Segat, Secretary, Cambridge
Madhu Sridhar, Andover
Greer Tan Swiston, Treasurer, Newton

Commission Staff:

Linda Brantley, Executive Director
Paula Daddona, Program Manager
Jill Ashton, Outreach Coordinator
Darlene Kelter, Administrative Assistant

Interns:

Liz Brennan
Eliza Buddenhagen
Rachel Caris
Michele DesAutels
Kat Dunn
Victoria Horan
Claire Hsu
Sarah Randle
Adrienne Shea



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Do you have questions or comments about this newsletter? If so, please contact Paula.Daddona@state.ma.us